



**The work of The HSUS** is grounded on a couple of core principles: Animals have the capacity to suffer, and we humans have the capacity to help them. We hold all the power over animals, and our choices and conduct have enormous consequences. And it's hardly some far-off or abstract concern, since they live in our communities, as pets and wild neighbors, and they are enmeshed in so many sectors of our economy and society, whether in food production, fashion, science, or wildlife management.

Where warranted, we at The HSUS invoke moral conviction to assure better outcomes for animals, placing principle ahead of selfish concerns, whether profit or whim or habit. In some cases, exercising moral choices requires some sacrifice, whether through higher prices for certain products or other tangible inconveniences. But making a modest or meaningful sacrifice to do good is a mark of our humanity, not some naïve or impractical notion. It's a moral imperative when the well-being and even

the survival of others rest with our routines and choices.

More often than not, these choices are easy, and hardly require any sacrifice. We can meet life's necessities and hardly notice the difference. With the genius and creativity of the human mind, we can devise alternatives to cruel treatment—and these alternatives often provide equivalent or even superior options.

Fur-wearing is a classic example. Fur itself is beautiful, and for keeping warm it has practical value. But today, we have natural fiber and synthetic alternatives that can match fur for style and warmth. If we choose coats not made of fur, our lives are not diminished. We gain all the comforts, but we do not needlessly extinguish 20 or 40 animal lives—whether by confining mink in cages and gassing them or by killing bobcats or raccoons with cruel steel-jawed leghold traps set out in the wild. In this case, human innovation has made the moral path obvious, and it's up to us to travel down it.

In this issue of *All Animals*, you'll see similar examples, especially when it comes to our dealings with other wildlife. Take the case of our campaign to require sport hunters to swap out lead ammunition in favor of copper or steel. The evidence suggests that millions of wild animals—from as many as 130 species—die from lead poisoning after feeding on lead-laced carcasses left behind by hunters, or in some cases, after foraging on lead pellets left on the ground. But alternatives are already available for sale and have all the necessary ballistic properties.

Some wildlife issues are more complex, but that doesn't diminish the need for active problem-solving. On page 16 we explore the impact of outdoor and feral cats, describing our work in Hawaii with wildlife agencies to protect cats as well as rare birds and other animals at risk.

In recent months, with the release of a Smithsonian Institution study that sought to quantify the impact of free-roaming cats on wildlife, there's been a high-pitched debate about the issue. As one of the few nonprofit organizations in the world with staff and programs devoted to helping not only cats and other companion animals but also wildlife (including the nation's largest wildlife rehabilitation center), we think we are uniquely suited to lead the debate.

Cat predation on wildlife is a serious issue, but the answer is not to capture free-roaming cats and kill them. Rather, it's to encourage responsible pet ownership—including spaying and neutering and, to the greatest extent practicable, keeping cats indoors. For free-roaming cats, it involves active management of colonies through trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs. In this case, there are no simple answers, but The HSUS brings moral concern and a realistic view informed by long and practical experience with cat and wildlife management issues.

Thoughtful citizens face a dizzying number of moral choices when it comes to our interactions with animals. These are not moral burdens, but moral opportunities. By demonstrating mercy and intelligence, we have the power to exert a lasting and beneficial impact on the lives of other creatures. And it's that kind of transformational change that The HSUS, through decisions of every supporter like you, seeks to ignite.

**COMING TOGETHER:** Free-roaming cats congregate near a park and ride in Hawaii, where The HSUS seeks to unite their advocates with conservationists (p. 16).



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